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# BUTTE COUNTY

*In the Sacramento Valley*

## CALIFORNIA

# RICE

*U. S. Government  
PUTS "OK" TWICE  
On BUTTE*

**RICE**—The news of the wonderful profits in Sacramento Valley rice has by now, nearly covered the entire United States. Many Southern rice growers are first inclined to doubt the truth of the reports received from the Butte County rice district, but investigation very soon convinces the most skeptical.

Butte County pioneered the rice industry in California, and still leads in production. Other localities have the necessary soil and climatic requirements, but very few can furnish the great amount of water necessary for extensive rice culture.

Experiments in Butte County were begun some ten years ago by the United States Government and later the Government established a rice demonstration farm of 57 acres on the adobe lands between the towns of Richvale and Biggs. Local people soon took up the industry, and extensive colonization operations brought many eastern families to the district where rice growing was made a specialty.

Any ordinary wheat farmer can easily become a successful rice farmer. The fundamental principles are the same, and the few new rules of water application, etc., which are necessary for the beginner to learn, are easily obtainable. Previous experience is not necessary in the least, in fact, entire strangers to rice growing and to California have received just as phenomenal profits in the very first year of their rice growing experience as the old and experienced growers from other rice growing sections.

In Butte County rice yields from 35 to 60 sacks per acre, weighing about 100 pounds each. It sells usually, for 2 cents and upward per pound, and, after expenses are paid, will net the grower from \$40 to \$90 per acre. A very conservative and safe estimate, would be an average of a 40 sack crop, a two cent price and a \$30 per acre expense. That gives an average of \$50 per acre per year clear of all expense, which profit is surely phenomenal when it is considered that good land with water for rice growing can still be bought in Butte County at from \$100 to \$150 per acre, and that the crop is planted and harvested the same year; that the market is good and that the common causes of failure in the older rice districts of the world are almost unknown here on account of superior climatic conditions.

**EXTENT OF RICE BELT AND TYPE OF SOIL**—The rice belt of Butte County at

present, extends from the Richvale Colonies just north of and surrounding the United States Government demonstration farm, south to the towns and colonies of Biggs and Gridley in each of which latter named towns extensive rice mills are operated.

The commonly called adobe lands are the best rice lands and there are thousands and thousands of acres of this fine, level rice land in Butte County adjoining the districts already mentioned. The adobe in Butte County is a chocolate colored heavy clay from two to four feet deep and underlaid with an impervious sub-soil or stiff clay or still more impervious hard-pan. This condition is positively essential for holding the water for long periods without which the rice cannot thrive.

**GOVERNMENT RICE FARM HERE**—The fact that Uncle Sam has established the Rice Demonstration Farm in this district is sufficient recommendation for climate, soil, water supply and drainage, but the importance of the two latter features and availability for them in this district, will be touched on briefly.

**WATER SUPPLY**—A supply of water for a part of the season and a shortage at a later period, is a condition which is absolutely fatal to the successful propagation of rice. The water **must** be supplied continuously and the nature of the plant is such that it will not stand drying out until it is desired to draw the water off and harvest the rice. Thorough investigation of water supply should be made before buying land upon which to grow rice, and pumping schemes in newly developed sections should especially be investigated.

The Feather River in Butte County, through the gigantic system of the Sutter-Butte Canal and Great Western Canal, furnishes water to the rice growers as well as to all other farmers requiring irrigation in the district. The Feather River drains 3350 square miles of mountain territory, has its source in the perpetual snows of the high Sierras and furnishes the second largest irrigation supply in the State. The Sutter-Butte Canal system has the first water right on the river and has an immense irrigation system of canals and laterals in operation. Their rights entitle them to irrigate a total of 150,000 acres in diversified crops when their system is completed.

The Western Canal which has just been built north of the Sutter-Butte sys-

tem, has the second water right on the Feather River and is now able to irrigate many thousands of acres of fine rice land.

**DRAINAGE**—Drainage is very essential to successful rice growing, and the facilities along this line in the rice belt of Butte County are excellent and are being made still better.

**PREPARATION OF LAND AND SEEDING**

**ING**—The contour check system of irrigation is used with about four inches fall to each check. The water is kept three to seven inches deep and should flow from the higher to the lower checks thus securing constant circulation. A constant new supply of about one inch per acre per day will be necessary to offset the effect of evaporation, seepage, etc.

The "rough" or unhulled rice is seeded usually with an ordinary seed drill, and planting extends from March 15th to May 1st, but the earlier, the better, just so the weather is warm enough to start the young plants. The crop is "flushed" or flooded from one to three times as the season requires until it is four to six inches high and beginning to "stool," when the land is kept covered constantly for about ninety days, or until the rice is nearly ripe, when it is drained off.

**HARVESTING**—After drainage, the land dries in ten days to two weeks and the rice is harvested with self binders and shocked as any grain, so it will dry for threshing. In another ten days of drying, the bundles are hauled to the separator in the field. Late September and October are harvest months.

**VARIETIES PLANTED**—Experiments have so far proven the Japanese rices to be best adapted to Butte County and the Wateribune and Shinriki varieties are most popular. The grower has the advantage of the Government Experiment and Demonstration Farm at his door where many new varieties are being closely watched, the aim being to increase the production and shorten the growing season.

**OPPORTUNITIES**—It is expected that a total of 20,000 acres will be planted to rice in Butte County this year. The industry is young but has made the most gigantic growth for its age of perhaps any other agricultural endeavor ever known to California. Butte County rice beats the world in both quality and quantity per acre and the industry already means millions to the State each year.

The time to buy rice land and get into the industry is RIGHT NOW while "ground floor" prices for both land and water are to be had.

**GENERAL FACTS ABOUT BUTTE COUNTY, SIZE AND LOCATION**—Butte County contains 1720 square miles and lies on the eastern side of the Sacramento Valley between the Sacramento river and the summit of the Sierra Nevada mountains.

**CLIMATE**—The agricultural and fruit belt of Butte County has a climate absolutely unsurpassed for the commercial production of every fruit, nut, vegetable, grain or flower known to the semi-tropical zone. An extract from U. S. Government Weather Bureau, tells the story:

Average yearly temperature, 61 degrees; average winter temperature, 48; average summer, 75; average lowest, 29; average highest, 100; average clear days, 238; average rainfall, 23 to 26 inches.

**U. S. PUTS ITS "O. K." TWICE ON BUTTE**—After detailed investigation into every county of every State in the United States where the least inviting prospect was to be found, in 1904 the U. S. Government finally located four miles south of Chico in Butte County, the most important plant garden of its kind in the world.

The garden, 80 acres in size, is used by Uncle Sam for the introduction, propagation and final selection for practical uses of plants, seeds, vines, bulbs, shrubs and trees gathered by experts from every part of the globe. The selection of Butte County for this wonderful institution, has put the "O. K." stamp of approval on our equitable climate and friable soil by the best farmer in the world—"Uncle Sam."

Again in the rice belt of Butte county, between Richvale and Biggs, Uncle Sam has established another Government farm where rice, corn and other cereals are expertly grown for practical demonstration purposes. These stations are of inestimable value to every resident of the county as well as of the entire State, and we, of Butte County, feel that what's good enough for Uncle Sam, is good enough for us and surely should be good enough for you.

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**TOPOGRAPHY AND PRODUCTS**—Divided in three sections, the western portion of Butte County, with an average elevation of 150 feet, is the finest of valley land. It is perfectly adapted to all deciduous fruit and nuts; to the finest of alfalfa, both with and without irrigation according to location; to rice, producing the world's best crops to date; to all other small grains and hay; to all varieties of corn, garden truck, dairy, hog and stock raising.

The middle portion lies along the foothills with an average elevation of perhaps 300 feet, making an ideal thermal belt. Oranges, olives, lemons and grapefruit grow here to perfection. The first naval oranges to reach the market each year, and the highest class of commercial olives come from this section. Soils are ideal, climate is unsurpassed and water is abundant and cheap.

The eastern portion extends upward to an elevation of over 6000 feet, with the higher mountains, perpetually snow-covered, immediately back of it. Here lies the vast timber belt, dotted with mills and some of the most extensive lumbering operations on the Pacific coast. The Feather River with four main forks, heads in the snow peaks, and, with its water shed of 3350 square miles, drains nearly this entire portion of the county. Water power is developed on a gigantic scale, totaling an amount equal to one-third the hydro-electric power developed in the entire State. The great river emerges into the broad valley below at a point where an immense volume of water is easily diverted for irrigation and forms a gravity water supply that is absolutely unsurpassed, and at the lowest possible cost to the consumer.

The mountains are rich in all kinds of minerals and commercial stone, gold leading the list with a production of over \$3,000,000 annually.

And lastly, the great mountains, heavily timbered in a riot of Nature's colorings, rising majestically on either side from a complex myriad of canyon gorges where the purest mountain streams come tumbling down, attract tourist and summer camper alike, while big and little game and fish are in abundance to delight the sportsman.

**ABOUT TOWNS**—Butte County's towns are completely modern and thoroughly represent the vast community of varied wealth which supports them. Chico, with a population of 16,000, is the largest city and is famous for being one of the most

beautiful and prosperous places in the State. Oroville, on the Feather River, is the county seat and the heart of the olive and citrus belt. Gridley and Biggs are the other incorporated cities, rich in agricultural surroundings. Many smaller towns are located throughout the county, each representing its special or varied industries.

**TRANSPORTATION**—Butte County is served from San Francisco by the main line of the Southern Pacific Railway to Portland, Oregon, and North, and a branch line to Oroville, the county seat; by the Western Pacific Railway up the beautiful Feather River Canyon from Oroville to Salt Lake City and east, and by the Northern Electric Interurban to Gridley, Biggs, Oroville, Durham and Chico, all competing with Sacramento and San Francisco steamers on the Sacramento river. The Butte County R. R. extends from Chico to the heart of the timber belt at Stirling.

**SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES**—By virtue of an immense State Normal, Chico is the educational center of Northern California. All the larger towns of the county maintain a superior system of grammar and high schools, while the rural districts are thoroughly covered by a complete and modern system of education. Buildings are modern, teachers are highly efficient and the entire school system would be a credit to any community.

Churches of all denominations are thoroughly represented in every community and several very costly and highly imposing edifices of worship are located in the larger towns. Free public libraries are numerous; good roads are everywhere and rural telephone and mail service abound, all of which promotes the highest order of religious, educational and social activity throughout the county.

The county is remarkably free from communities of undesirable foreign elements which would mar the high-class of citizenship.

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WHEN VISITING THE  
PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION,  
ASK FOR  
MR. C. H. CHACE,  
Officially Representing Butte County.